REMARKS

In response to the Office Action, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 1-16 were previously canceled. Claim 17 is cancelled herein. Claims 18, 19, 22 - 25 have been amended herein. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, in paragraphs [0069] and FIG. 1. No new claims have been added by way of this response. Thus, claims 18 - 37 are currently pending and presented for examination. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant respectfully submits that this Amendment should only require a cursory review because the claim amendments presented herein do not add any new features and/or do not significantly alter the scope of the claims. Consequently, the claim amendments should not require any further search by the Examiner. This Amendment is necessary as it clarifies and/or narrows the issues for consideration by the Board and was not earlier presented because Applicant believed that the prior response(s) placed this application in condition for allowance, for at least the reasons set forth in those response(s). Accordingly, entry of the present Amendment, as an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and/or to reduce the number of issues, is requested under 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

Response to Rejections Under Section 101:

The Examiner rejected claim 17 under 35 USC 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 17 has been cancelled rendering the rejection moot. Since none of the other claims were rejected under Section 101, Applicant submits that the remaining claims are statutory.

Response to Rejections Under Section 103:

The Examiner rejects Claims 17 – 21, 23 – 25, and 31 - 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Collier* (US Patent No. 7,299,209) in view of *Ishiguro* et al. (US Patent Pub. No. 2002/0194475). The Examiner rejects Claims 22, 26 - 30 under 35

U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Collier* (US Patent No. 7,299,209) in view of *Ishiguro* et al. (US Patent Pub. No. 2002/0194475) further in view of *Frison* et al.

Independent claim 17 was cancelled. Claim 19 was amended to be in independent form. Claim 25 has been amended as set forth in the above listing of claims. Essentially, the claims are amended to further clarify that the plurality handlers are of *different types* to receive keys of *different types*, respectively, <u>linked to a respective plurality of software programs which need to be enabled by different keys</u> and that these handlers are connected to a single license key handler manager, thereby providing one interface for a user for license enabling for software programs which require a specific *type* of key, rather than having to interface with numerous handlers for each software program.

Specifically, Claim 19, as amended recites:

<u>A system for managing a plurality of license keys for a plurality of software programs which need to be enabled, each software program being enabled by a license key of a specific type, the software programs configured for open-loop or closed-loop control when executed by least one automation component, the system comprising:</u>
<u>a plurality of license key handlers of different types linked to a respective plurality of software programs which need to be enabled, the plurality of license key handlers for receiving license keys of different types, respectively;</u> wherein the plurality of license key handlers are associated with a license key memory, in which case the license key handler stores the license key in the license key memory<u>; and</u>
<u>a license key handler manager connected by a data link to each license key handler to exchange data with each license key handler, said license key manager thereby providing one interface for a user for license enabling for the plurality of software programs which need to be enabled.</u>

Similarly, Claim 25, as amended recites:

A method for <u>managing a plurality of license keys for a plurality of software programs which need to be enabled, each software program being enabled by a license key of a specific type,</u> ~~enabling the execution of at least one software program which needs to be enabled by a license key of a specific type~~, the method comprising:
providing at least first and second license key handlers of different types <u>associated with a license key memory</u> for receiving license keys of different types, respectively<u>, for</u>

enabling first and second software programs which need to be enabled by a license key of a specific type;

connecting the first and second license handlers to a license key handler manager, said license key manager thereby providing one interface for a user for license enabling for the first and second software programs; and

identifying the type of license key handler of the at least first or second license key handler by the license key handler manager.

None of *Collier*, *Ishiguro*, or *Frison* alone or in combination teach or suggest this requirement of Applicant's amended claims 19 and 25, namely that there are license key handlers of different types for receiving a license keys of different types, respectively to enable **different software programs requiring keys of different types**.

The keys of *Collier* are essentially a pair of keys designed to work together to provide a second level of security when delivering material (of a single type) to the end user. Moreover, *Ishiguro* fails to remedy the shortcomings of *Collier* in that it to deals only with a hash function and service key used to generate a license key and then generates a session key. Moreover, *Frison* fails to remedy the shortcomings of *Collier*. Specifically, *Frison* describes a pay-per-use (PPU) scheme wherein all of the licenses are of the *same type*, namely PPU licenses. It therefore does not need or utilize handlers of "different types" for receiving license keys of "different types".

Essentially, none of the cited references comprise a manager linked to a plurality of handlers linked to a plurality of software programs needing to be enabled by a plurality of keys of different key types.

In view of the foregoing and the amended claims, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references do not disclose or suggest all features of amended Claims 19 and 25. Therefore, the references do not render Claims 19 and 25 obvious. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and to pass independent Claims 19 and 25 to allowance.

The remaining claims depend from Claims 19 and 25, respectively. These dependent claims recite additional inventive features that are in combination with the features of the respective independent claim not disclosed or suggested by the cited references. The above arguments regarding Claims 19 and 25 are repeated herewith. Each one of these

dependent claims is, therefore, on its own patentable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and to withdraw the instant rejections and to pass the claims to allowance.
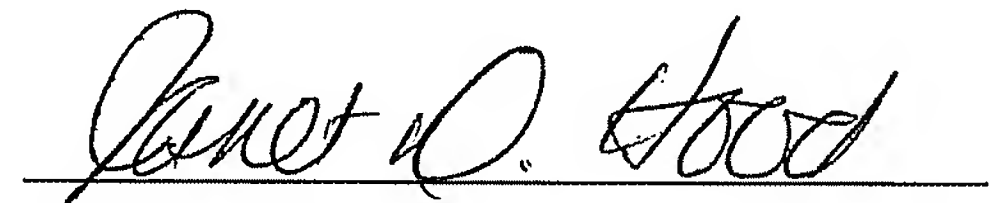
Conclusion

Accordingly, Applicant submits that all claims are in condition for allowance and request that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper, including the fees specified in 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 (c), 1.17(a)(1) and 1.20(d), or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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